

REMARKS

I. Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-24 were pending in the above-identified patent application.

In the Office Action of October 21, 2004, independent claims 1 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Norden-Paul et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,247,611 (hereinafter "Norden-Paul").

Applicant herein amends claims 1 and 16 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as his invention. The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. The Rejection of the Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

As set forth above, independent claims 1 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Norden-Paul. The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

II.1 Summary of Applicant's Independent Claims

As described in the application, the Applicant's independent claims are directed to the problem of providing a dynamic spreadsheet-based system. At least one aspect of the invention is addressed to, for example, the problem that, inter alia, spreadsheet-based reports must be defined as static columns and rows if the report is to include full spreadsheet formatting and calculation capabilities. The present invention permits, inter alia, running a program that enables

detailed cell-by-cell formatting and calculation control by dynamically defining columns and rows.

More particularly, the claimed invention accomplishes this by providing a method and a system for dynamic spreadsheet reporting that provides an electronic spreadsheet having a plurality of cells that are arrayed in a defined number of columns and rows and provides a database in communication with the electronic spreadsheet. Upon receiving an expansion formula in at least one of the plurality of cells that identifies at least one dimension member, the expansion formula functions to control the retrieval of data associated with the at least one dimension member by querying the database. The expansion formula also functions to automatically adjust at least one of the defined number of the columns and rows to accommodate the data responsive to the querying of the database. Thus, when processing an expansion formula, the claimed invention retrieves the appropriate dimension members and expands/contracts an appropriate discrete region of the spreadsheet to include the retrieved dimension members, while maintaining the overall report structure, operation, and functionality of the spreadsheet. The expansion/contraction of a discrete portion of the spreadsheet based on the operation of the claimed invention does not impair or negatively impact the presentation, operation, and/or functionality of adjacent or related portions of the spreadsheet.

II.2 The Rejection and The Norden-Paul Reference

In rejecting independent claims 1 and 16, the Examiner cited portions of Norden-Paul as showing each of the elements of claim 1 and 16. In particular, the Examiner cited column 5, lines 15-17 and column 6, lines 65-68. See, e.g., October 21, 2004 Office Action, page 2.

Norden-Paul is directed to a computer system and method for automated records management where each cell of spreadsheet is identified by one or more parameters (which often act as row and/or column labels) and where the size of each cell may be changed depending on the information displayed within the cell. Unlike Applicant's approaches, Norden-Paul does not have the capability (i) to retrieve data in response to receiving an expansion formula or (ii) to automatically adjust at least one of the defined number of said columns and rows to accommodate the data.

Norden-Paul does not show or suggest a process when data is received that would populate an area of cells larger than that defined in the spreadsheet. At most, FIGS. 12A and 12B of Norden-Paul show a process for adding in extra lines to increase the size of an individual cell based on the incoming value of the cell. Although Norden-Paul discloses determining whether a line in a cell is filled-in, this in no way indicates that Norden-Paul determines and expands and/or contracts the defined number of columns or rows to accommodate retrieved data from the database.

As can also be seen from Appendix A, Norden-Paul does not show or suggest using an expansion formula that identifies at least one dimension member to control the retrieval of data associated with the at least one dimension member. Rather, in response to selecting a "Show Detail" option, the Norden-Paul system generates a form by retrieving a form definition and object structures based on row descriptors and a form name and determines which of the objects' attributes to display. The "Show Detail" option of Norden-Paul does not identify at least one dimension member for the retrieval of data.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be withdrawn.

Claims 2-15 and 17-24 are dependent from independent claims 1 and 16, respectively, and are allowable at least because claims 1 and 16 are allowable.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that, as described above, the cited prior art does not show or suggest the combination of features recited in the claims. Applicant does not concede that the cited prior art shows any of the elements recited in the claims. However, Applicant has provided specific examples of elements in the claims that are clearly not present in the cited prior art.

In addition, each of the combination of limitations recited in the claims includes additional limitations not shown or suggested by the prior art. Therefore, for these reasons as well, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Further, there is no motivation shown to combine the prior art cited by the Examiner, and even if these teachings of the prior art are combined, the combination of elements of claims, when each is interpreted as a whole, is not disclosed in the Examiner's proposed combination. As the combination of elements in each of the claims is not disclosed, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejections.

Applicant strongly emphasizes that one reviewing the prosecution history should not interpret any of the examples Applicant has described herein in connection with distinguishing over the prior art as limiting to those specific features in isolation. Rather, Applicant asserts that it is the combination of elements recited in each of the claims, when each claim is interpreted as a whole, which is patentable. Applicant has emphasized certain features in the claims as clearly not present in the cited references, as discussed above. However, Applicant does not concede that other features in the claims are found in the prior art. Rather, for the sake of simplicity, Applicant is providing examples of why the claims described above are distinguishable over the cited prior art.

Applicant wishes to clarify for the record, if necessary, that the claims have been amended to expedite prosecution. Moreover, Applicant reserves the right to pursue the original subject matter recited in the present claims in a continuation application.

Any narrowing amendments made to the claims in the present Amendment are not to be construed as a surrender of any subject matter between the original claims and the present claims; rather merely Applicant's best attempt at providing one or more definitions of what the Applicant believes to be suitable patent protection. In addition, the present claims provide the intended scope of protection that Applicant is seeking for this application. Therefore, no estoppel should be presumed, and Applicant's claims are intended to include a scope of protection under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

Further, Applicant hereby retracts any arguments and/or statements made during prosecution that were rejected by the Examiner during prosecution and/or that were unnecessary to obtain allowance, and only maintains the arguments that persuaded the Examiner with respect to the allowability of the patent claims, as one of ordinary skill would understand from a review of the prosecution history. That is, Applicant specifically retracts statements that one of ordinary skill would recognize from reading the file history were not necessary, not used and/or were rejected by the Examiner in allowing the patent application.

For all the reasons advanced above, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections have been overcome and should be withdrawn.

For all the reasons advanced above, Applicant respectfully submits that the Application is in condition for allowance, and that such action is earnestly solicited.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees, which may be required for this Amendment, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

In the event that an Extension of Time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an Extension of Time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that Extension of Time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an Extension of Time or credit any overpayment for an Extension of Time to Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

Respectfully submitted,

Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip R. Poh', written over a horizontal line.

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